

Application No.: 10/539,667
Amendment Dated: May 27, 2009
Reply to Office Action of: February 27, 2009

MAT-8703US

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawing includes changes to Fig. 7. This sheet replaces the original sheet.

Remarks/Arguments:

Fig. 7 has been amended to correct an obvious error.

Claims 1-13, 15-28 and 31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson et al. (US 2006/0036763) in view of Shigehashi (JP 2003-046539) in view of Kuo (US 7,209,435). It is respectfully submitted, however, that Applicants' claims are patentable over the art of record for the reasons set forth below.

An exemplary embodiment of the present invention is illustrated in Applicants' Fig. 7. Router calculation device 20 requests router status information from router devices 21 and 22. In an exemplary embodiment, router device 21 is a master router and router device 22 is a backup router. Router devices 21 and 22 forward status information about router devices 21 and 22 to router priority calculation device 20. Router priority calculation device 20 calculates a priority for the router devices 21 and 22. Based on the calculated priority, one of router devices 21 and 22 will be a master router and the other or router devices 21 and 22 will be the backup router. Router device 21 is told which of the router devices will be a master router and which of the router devices will be a backup router. Router device 22 is also told which of the router devices will be a master router and which of the router devices will be a backup router. Thus, each of the router devices is told which of the router devices will be a master router and which of the router devices will be a backup router. In other words, a router device is told about itself and another router.

Applicants have amended the claims for the sole purpose of clarifying the language of the claims. Thus, for example, Applicants claim 1 now recites:

... notifying ... each of the plurality of router devices that the respective router device is to operate as the master router and the plurality of router devices other than the respective router device are to operate as the backup routers ... (emphasis added).

Again, by use of the words "each of," Applicants wish to convey that each router is told not only how the router itself is to operate (master or backup) but also how other routers are to operate (master or backup).

The above language is supported by the originally filed application. For example, at page 34, lines 2-5, the originally filed specification states:

It further multicasts an identifier 601 of a physical router device that is to become a master to all the physical routers through the network interface 131 (step S1807). (Emphasis added).

The above feature appears to be discussed on page 5 of the Official Action. Particularly, the Official Action states that Kuo discloses a "hello packet." Kuo's hello packet, however, is different than Applicants' claimed feature of transmitting to each of the routers how the plurality of routers are to operate (again, so that a router is not only told how it will operate but how other routers will operate). The other cited references also do not disclose Applicants' claimed feature. As the above feature is neither disclosed nor suggested by the art of record, claim 1 is patentable over the art of record.

The remaining independent claims, while not identical to claim 1, are also patentable over the art of record for reasons similar to those set forth above with regard to claim 1.

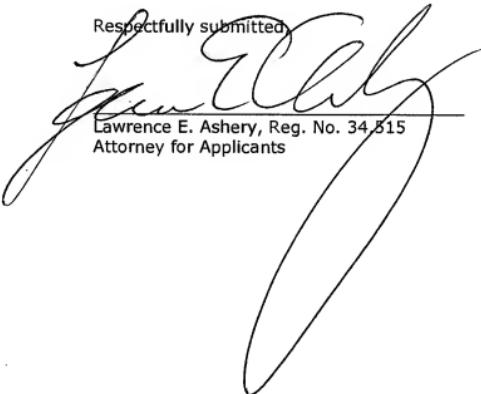
The dependent claims are patentable by virtue of their dependency on allowable independent claims.

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In view of the amendments and arguments set forth above, the above-identified application is in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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LEA/lea/dmw/fp

Attachment: Fig. 7 (1 sheet)

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